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ABSTRACT

This document is a case study of the way in which the Fordham University School of Education developed its governance procedures and of the effect that external intervention, in this instance the TTT (Trainers of Teacher Trainers) project, had on the process. The situation before TTT is described as having an emphasis on training teachers for the inner city: monthly faculty meetings were held at which all faculty members and all graduate student representatives were entitled to vote. It is stated that the coming of the TTT project to the university necessitated defining boundaries of authority: the TTT Policy Committee only controlled TTT activities; Fordham controlled Fordham; fellowships and scholarships were decided jointly by the TTT Policy Committee and Fordham, in that members of the Policy Committee served on the Admission Committee. Soon, it is reported, TTT fellows found themselves in the mainstream of university governance. (JA)

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SUPPLEMENT TO ***Alternative Models for the Co-operative Governance of Teacher Education Programs****, by Edgar L. Sagan and Barbara G. Smith, published by the Deans Committee, Study Commission on Undergraduate Education and the Education of Teachers.*

This article was prepared by ***Harry Rivlin****, Study Commission member and former dean of the* ***Fordham University School of Education****. Rivlin was asked by* ***Paul A. Olson****, Study Commission director, to write about a specific example of governance because he was director of a* ***TTT (Training the Teacher Trainers) Leadership Training Institute*** *at* ***Fordham*** *during a period of changing governance which seems to have had some permanent effect on the university and perhaps on the community.*

SP008 017

A Case Study in Changing the Governance of a Teacher Education Program

By Harry N. Rivlin
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Sagan and Smith have contributed a great deal by their analysis of the problems of governance of teacher education programs and by their application of systems theory to these programs. They stress, however, that it is not their purpose "to specify a particular model of governance that *should* be utilized by all teacher education programs. Not every program could benefit from the same kinds and styles of administrative inputs."

Taking advantage of the implied suggestion that institutions will vary in their governance procedures and in the manner in which these procedures change, this paper is in a sense a case study of the way in which the Fordham University School of Education developed its governance procedures and of the effect that external intervention, in this instance the TTT (Training the Teacher Trainers) project, had upon the process.

Edward Ladd stresses the importance of common goals and, according to Sagan and Smith, "concludes that if schools and universities agree that they must achieve a mutual dependency in the future, then that agreement will have to include a merging of goals. No longer could the schools be the province of the *learner*, while the universities remained focused on *learning;* tensions would be reduced by recognizing those purposes which are neither common nor contradictory but neutral, compatible with one another, or even in a sense contributory to one another."

Judging from Fordham's experience, two other conditions are also necessary. First, the background for change must be carefully prepared so that those who are involved in changes in governance will be ready to accept change. Second, those who are affected by changes in governance should be involved in the process of change from the very beginning instead of being confronted with a *fait accompli.* In short, it is unlikely that any new system of governance in teacher education, however laudable its intent or commendable its scheme, has any great chance of succeeding if imposed from above.

New Emphasis on Inner City Training

The extent to which Fordham's TTT project changed the teacher education program's system of governance was determined in large part by what was happening before TTT came. The university administration was eager to see Fordham play a more active role in the community and welcomed a new dean of the School of Education, who had been deeply involved in urban education for many years. At his first meeting with the faculty, the dean invited the School of Education to focus its attention on the preparation of educational personnel for service in inner city schools. The faculty unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed the proposal in principle and asked the dean to implement it. Within a week, a group of the student leaders also endorsed the change in direction and urged that the new program be instituted while they were still at college "instead of waiting for posterity." As a result of all of this support and the concentrated efforts of many faculty members, a new program for preparing teachers for urban schools was actually started the following semester (five months and one hour after the new dean's arrival); a new program for preparing teachers, especially blacks and Puerto Ricans, for administrative positions in the city schools was started a year later; and within some two or three years every professional program was reorganized in order to

focus attention on the problems and the opportunities in urban education. Why the faculty and students should have been eager for so thoroughgoing a change is another story in itself, but it is clear that the change would have been neither so complete nor so rapid unless the university administration, the school administration, the faculty, and the students were ready for it.

Under the new dean, the principles of governance and the policy making procedures in the School of Education became relatively informal and aimed at the maximum involvement of faculty, staff and interested students.

All full-time members of the faculty and all graduate assistants are expected at the monthly faculty meetings, which alternate between being business sessions conducted by the dean and professional meetings at which the chairman of the Agenda Committee presides. Twelve graduate students, three from each of the four graduate divisions, elected by the students in that division, are specifically invited to come.

The associate dean, who is also the director of graduate studies, meets with the divisional chairmen four or five times each semester to discuss administrative and educational policies and procedures. The dean, who attends these meetings, uses them for preliminary airings of proposed innovations preparatory to having them taken up in detail at divisional meetings and later at general faculty meetings.

Anyone in Attendance Eligible to Vote

All faculty members and all graduate student representatives may attend any committee meeting, even though they are not members of that committee, with everyone who comes to a faculty or committee meeting having both voice and vote. We have encountered no difficulty with this loose and open organization because few questions have ever been decided by a close vote. When, however, it does happen that the vote is close, our usual procedure is to bring the matter up again at a later meeting rather than settle it by a recount.

The dean regularly attends as many as possible of the divisional faculty meetings, which are also open to members of other divisions and to interested students. Many of the major issues which may later be on the School of Education faculty meeting agenda are thus examined in detail by several smaller groups. These divisional meetings provide opportunities for relatively informal discussions of issues by administrators, faculty, and students before they become formal issues.

The dean rarely—never is probably more nearly the accurate word—presents a new idea at a faculty meeting without a great deal of preliminary discussion with the associate dean and divisional chairmen at their meetings, with faculty members and students in the four divisions at divisional meetings, and with individual faculty members and students.

The School of Education's commitment to urban education and to the new system of governance became, therefore, a thoroughgoing one because it represented not a dean's decision but rather one that was made and implemented by faculty and students.

When the Fordham School of Education was selected by the Office of Education's Bureau of Educational Personnel Development as one of the original sixty "places" to submit a TTT proposal, possibly because of Fordham's focus on urban education, a group of people drawn from the faculty of the School of Education, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the school system spent a week in drawing up a plan that involved working closely with members of the community in the local school district in which the School of Education was situated. By identifying itself so closely with a specific city school district, Fordham hoped to develop an effective working relationship with schools and with an identifiable community that could develop a pattern for replication elsewhere.

Community Corporations Asked to Participate

At this point, those who had prepared the plan invited the three community corporations in the school district (Har-You Act, Mid-West Side Community Corporation and the Lower West Side Community Corporation) to send representatives to a meeting at Fordham University where the plan would be presented and community participation invited. It did not take long to sense the mood of the community representatives—they were of no mind to accept any plan that any university prepared for the community. If the community was to be involved in a joint program, it wanted to come in as part of the planning and execution of the program and not as beneficiaries of a plan prepared by others.

Fortunately, this mood was evident so early in the meeting that the plan which had been prepared so carefully never was presented in its entirety. Instead, learning the lesson rapidly that community involvement starts at the beginning of planning a program rather than at the end, Fordham changed the topic for discussion from "How do you like what we have thought of for you to do?" to "What should we all be trying to do?" and "How can we do it?"

For the community, the school, and the university to work together as equals in devising a new program of cooperative action was time-consuming and sometimes discouraging. At first, the community representatives were resentful when not hostile, and were openly wary of the university's motives in enlisting their help, for their past experiences with universities made them reluctant to be part of a show-case display.

When the group finally did agree on the proposal that was submitted to Washington (a little later than the official deadline, it must be admitted), we all knew that the decisions as to which projects would be funded would not be made by the Office of Education until December. Nevertheless, Fordham's dean announced that the university had gained so much from the school system's and the community's contributions to the discussion that, regardless of whether or not Fordham's TTT project would be funded (it later was), the university would continue this close association with the schools and the community organizations.

Probably the wisest move the university made in cementing the cooperative relationship was to call the group together in October, well before anyone knew about the fate of the TTT proposal, paying each of the people a consultant's fee, to discuss the plans which Fordham was making to introduce core courses in urban education to be required of all graduate students in the School of Education. It is noteworthy that the very people who were so suspicious of the university only a half year earlier now commended the School of Education for the urban education program it had organized and expressed the hope that the faculty would approve it officially. It did.

How did TTT affect the governance of teacher education at Fordham? Officially, it had little effect at first because the TTT program was only one of many programs being conducted at the university and the governance procedures already stressed maximum participation by faculty and students. In practice, however, profound changes were supported that might otherwise have failed, and some changes in procedure became so thoroughly institutionalized that they are persisting even though TTT ended some time ago.

Boundaries of Authority Well Defined

To reduce conflicts in authority between TTT and the university, it was important to define the boundaries of authority. Thus, the TTT Policy Committee and only the Policy Committee, not Fordham, controlled TTT activities; and only Fordham, not the TTT Policy Committee, controlled Fordham's activities. For example, the director of the TTT Project was chosen by the Policy Committee, but it was the Fordham University School of Education, following its usual faculty procedures, that appointed her to the rank of associate professor. When the director resigned from TTT to return to the institution which had granted her a leave of absence for two years, the TTT

Policy Committee chose a successor, but that person was appointed by Fordham as an assistant professor, because according to university procedures, that was the appropriate rank.

A parity relationship was the basis on which the TTT Policy Committee was constituted. There were eighteen voting members—six from the community, six from the school system, and six from the university. Each category was further subdivided. The three community corporations designated two representatives each for their total of six. The school membership was made up of two representatives from the local superintendent's office, two principals, and two teachers. The university representatives included two administrators, two faculty members, and two students—in each category one came from the Liberal Arts College and one from the School of Education. To demonstrate his determination not to dominate the Policy Committee, the dean of the School of Education was a non-voting member of the Policy Committee.

In line with the principle of parity, all members of the Policy Committee, with the exception of the dean of the School of Education, received the same honorarium for attending meetings. Thus, the school's district superintendent, the community representatives, the college students, and the professors and college administrators were treated as equals in their voting rights and in the payment for their services. The dean of the School of Education accepted no fee since he thought it improper to be paid for participation in a program being conducted in the School of Education, but that was his own decision, not one imposed by the Policy Committee.

The first resolution adopted by the Policy Committee defined both the breadth and the limitations of its powers. The Committee was free to make any recommendations it wished to the community corporations, to the schools, or to the university. The community corporations were free, however, to accept, modify, or reject the recommendations. Similarly, both schools and the university were proper subjects for study and targets for recommendation, without giving the Policy Committee the power to dictate to any of the three component groups. "Good fences make good neighbors" not only in New England but also in teacher education.

A seemingly insignificant motion made at a Policy Committee meeting during the first year of operation was nevertheless a good indication of the degree of cooperative thinking and acting that had developed. One of the members of the committee suggested that since the director of the TTT program was a member of the university faculty and the elected committee chairman was a community representative, a school system representative should be selected as co-chairman. It was a school representative who dismissed the suggestion as unnecessary because, she said, "We are not operating as factions or as blocs." The motion was not seconded and the question was never raised again.

Fellowships and Scholarships Decided Jointly

Getting the three partners to work together developed through experience as problems arose that had to be settled. Let's take as an illustration the selection of the people to be granted fellowships and scholarships in the urban education programs in which they were to be enrolled. The Policy Committee determined how many scholarships could be granted within the amount of money made available from the TTT funds and then set a quota for each of the community corporations and the district's schools. The community corporations and the schools were then free to nominate the men and women they thought most qualified for the awards. These were only nominations, however, since the award implied admission to a university graduate program, and admission is a university function. Two members of the Policy Committee selected by the Policy Committee were appointed by the dean to be members of the Admissions Committee, probably one of the first times that people not on a university faculty sat as fully participating and voting members of a University Committee on Admissions.

The community members both taught and learned from this experience. They taught their faculty colleagues

that a prospective student's commitment to serve the community was a valid consideration before the decision is made to enroll him in a program for service in urban education. They also learned. They discovered that a faculty committee's evaluation of a prospective student's qualifications for admission is more than an arbitrary application of arbitrary rules. The discussions that went on in the Committee on Admissions probably did as much as any other part of the TTT program to give school, community, and university a chance to work together and thus to know each other better.

Objections Raised on Person-to-Person Basis

One of the important by-products of having Policy Committee members serve on the Admissions Committee was the way in which it opened one more channel for communication among community, school, and university. In fact, the opportunities for informal discussion with people one got to know–in Policy Committee meetings and in the seminars which will be discussed later–made unnecessary any formal requests for formal meetings at which grievances could be presented or questions asked. Differences of opinion about important issues that might otherwise have led to confrontations, with their "non-negotiable demands," were resolved more easily and more quickly when each part of TTT came to understand what the other sectors were trying to achieve and when objections could be raised on an informal person-to-person basis rather than in an adversary relationship.

In one of the programs conducted by TTT, fifteen people--five from the community groups, five from the schools, and five from the university faculty--were appointed as Fellows each semester. The community's Fellows were paid for their services, while the school system and the university were given the funds needed to hire replacements for each TTT Fellow. This way service could be included as part of the teacher's or professor's instructional program instead of being an additional assignment, and the Fellows from the school system and the university received only a nominal honorarium. Every Fellow was given an assignment in one or both of the other two parts of TTT. Thus, community Fellows were assigned to the schools and the university; school Fellows went to the community corporations and the university; and university Fellows went to the schools and the community corporations.

This assignment of Fellows did much to break down stereotypes and to develop the kind of understanding and cooperation that can be achieved only by working together. One faculty member who had had little prior experience working with, as contrasted with hiring or supervising, members of minority ethnic groups, was assigned to a large and prosperous business firm that was owned and managed by blacks. In another instance, two members of the Physics Department in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences were assigned to a local elementary school. As was to be expected, they were shocked by the inadequacy of the science program and they regarded the teachers as incompetent teachers of science. Resisting the temptation to conduct a course, they organized and led a weekly workshop session participated in by classroom teachers, student teachers, paraprofessionals, and members of the community who were working with the schools. What was not expected, however, was that these professors, who had previously shown little interest in what was happening in elementary schools, became so concerned and involved in elementary education that they continued the workshops even after their assignment was over.

The community and school Fellows who were assigned to the School of Education were accepted as full-fledged members of the academic community and participated as voting members of faculty committees and in both divisional and school-wide faculty meetings. While the school Fellows had an obvious contribution to make to the preparation of teachers, the community members' contributions were also important, at least partly because of the revolution that has occurred in school-community relations. Gone are the days when the school system on its own was free to formulate its educational objectives and then go to the community to get it to understand what the school hoped to achieve, to win community support for these objectives, and to use the community personnel and material resources to further the program. Today, the community has its own ideas about educational objectives and wants to get the school to understand what the community hopes to achieve, to win the school's support for these objectives, and to use the school's personnel and material resources to further the program.

In cooperation with TTT, Fordham conducted seminars, often taught jointly by a member of the university faculty and a school or community representative, and attended by university faculty, graduate students, school personnel, and members of the community. These seminars, in addition to focusing attention on such major questions as the optimum utilization of paraprofessionals or the problems presented by racial tension in the schools, helped participants from different backgrounds to understand the others' points of view and to profit from their contributions.

That the TTT Fellows who came from the schools and the communities, as well as the school and community people who entered various Fordham University programs after having been nominated for admission by the Policy Committee, were in a position to participate so effectively in deliberations customarily restricted to university faculty members was relatively easy because of the internal governance procedures that had been developed within the School of Education.

TTT Fellows in Mainstream of University Governance

With this open kind of governance procedure in effect, it was only to be expected that the TTT Fellows and Scholars, once they had overcome the shock of finding themselves fully accepted, should quickly adjust to being in the main stream of School of Education governance. They discovered that faculty members did not always agree among themselves and that not every suggestion made by a member of the faculty was accepted immediately by his colleagues without any modifications. They thus learned not to feel rejected when one of their suggestions was discussed and modified instead of being accepted immediately. They learned, too, that a university administrator could not demand that a faculty do this or that and that pressuring the administrator was not always the best way of effecting a change that the community or school system thought necessary.

Of course the key question is whether these gains are permanent. All too often an educational program that seems to have been successful loses its effectiveness when those who started the program leave and it is taken over by others. Sometimes, we are so concerned with changing the institution that too little attention is paid to institutionalizing the change. What will happen when a new dean follows the dean during whose seven-year term much of the change occurred?

There are many reasons to expect the system of governance at Fordham to be continued. First, because the university administration, faculty, and students approved so thoroughly of the changes that had occurred and because they participated so actively in effecting the changes, it was only natural that their representatives on the Search Committee should have recommended, and the university president approved, the appointment of a new dean who was committed to the point of view the governance procedures reflected.

Second, there were so many changes in the curricular procedures in the School of Education that abandoning them is unlikely. The Pre-Service Teacher Education Program, for example, is so largely a field-based program that it would be difficult to eliminate working closely with the schools and the communities.

Third, the School of Education faculty, some members of the TTT Policy Committee, and many TTT Fellows and Scholars are in positions where they can maintain the spirit of the governance procedures if they so wish. Both the newly elected Community School Superintendent in this district and the Associate Dean and Director of Graduate Studies were members of the TTT Policy Board from the beginning of the project to the end. Of course the School of Education faculty are obviously free to continue the governance procedures they had helped create.

Fourth, the regulations of the New York State Education Department calling for Performance Based Teacher Certification require that the schools, the community, and the university work together to establish criteria for

certification and to help prospective teachers meet them. For the Fordham School of Education, the coming of Performance Based Teacher Certification provides the legal basis for continuing a relationship it has been working for years to develop.

Changes Not Made Smoothly or Suddenly

It would be both unwarranted and untrue to get the impression that all went smoothly once the decision was made to change the system of governance in the School of Education and that hostility and bias evaporated as soon as people from different backgrounds went to work on a common task. Attitudes do not change that quickly. Only in Euclidean geometry is it true that a straight line is the shortest distance between any two points. When it comes to working with people, more wisdom is to be found in the Chinese proverb that there is nothing more soft than water but for wearing away things that are strong and hard there is nothing more strong than water, as The Grand Canyon of Arizona so beautifully proves.

There were no sudden changes of deep-rooted hostility or bias. Undoubtedly, many members of the community still feel hostile or at least suspicious so far as the university is concerned, and many school personnel still regard university professors as unrealistic theorists who could not survive for a day as classroom teachers in an inner city school. To be sure, there are also university professors who are not sure it is either necessary or efficient to spend so much of their time with community people. Yet, the repeated opportunities for seeing how other people think, for finding that seemingly opposite goals are often really similar, and for finding that differences of opinion may lead to constructive action did have their effect in a great many (but not all) instances.